

THE **Quill**

**A MAGAZINE FOR
WRITERS, EDITORS,
AND PUBLISHERS**

If I Were 18 Again—

By James L. Kilgallen
Staff Correspondent, International News Service

Some Sports Writing History—

By Fred Wittner
Sports Desk, the New York Herald Tribune

And This Is 1933!

By Editor X

Steady Markets for Short Items

By Douglas Lurton
Assistant Managing Editor, the Fawcett Publications

Plain Talk to Undergraduate Editors

By Curtis D. MacDougall
Lecturer, University of Wisconsin

College Dailies Take the Count

By Bruce C. Yates
Assistant Editor, the Daily Californian

As They View It • At Deadline • The Book Beat

May 1933

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THE QUILL

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AT DEADLINE

By R. L. P.

THIS month we are devoting considerable space to a subject not often discussed in THE QUILL—undergraduate publications and their editors.

Bruce Yates, assistant editor of the *Daily Californian*, tells something of the problems brought to campus publications by the depression. Curtis D. MacDougall, a lecturer in journalism at the University of Wisconsin, takes undergraduate editors to task for failing in their jobs—for their lack of originality.

Are you fed up on newspaper work? Do you wish you had taken up plumbing, running a grocery store or farming? Read what James L. Kilgallen, star I. N. S. writer, has to say in his article "If I Were 18 Again—"

Have you started trying to add to your income by writing for the magazines? Douglas Lurton, assistant managing editor of the Fawcett Publications, continues his series of articles intended to help you in such ventures.

Interested in sports? Fred Wittner, of the New York *Herald Tribune's* sports desk, tells something of James Gordon Bennett and the rise of the sports section.

THE Editor wishes to acknowledge receipt of a copy of "The History of Journalism in the Philippine Islands" from its author, Jesus Z. Valenzuela, instructor in English and journalism in the University of the Philippines. The volume is an interesting account of the press in the islands and speaks plainly and frankly of present-day tendencies. Anyone interested in the question of independence of the islands should read this monograph if he would understand the viewpoint of Filipino leaders on the question.

INTERESTING journalistic developments we have noted recently included the action taken by Prof. William L. Mapel, director of the school of journalism at Washington and Lee University, in reducing the technical courses required for a degree and throwing increased emphasis on background training in history, economics, political science, language and literature.

He explains the school will continue to emphasize the acquiring of a good style of news writing but will devote most of its efforts to stressing the relation of background to actual newspaper technique. The object is better informed graduates.

"If journalism is a trade," Prof.

(Continued on page 10)

If I Were Eighteen Again —

By JAMES L. KILGALLEN

Staff Correspondent, International News Service

NEWSPAPER work as a career—is it worth while? I think the answer is "Yes."

I was moved to ponder this question upon reading an article in Heywood Broun's column recently. Someone signing himself "Cub" made a few critical and rather cynical observations about the life of a newspaperman.

"Cub" said that newspapermen "as a tribe" are "passive lads" who spend their lives in the reflected glory of those who have the ability to do things. That we follow the big fellows, heroes and scoundrels, and chronicle their deeds and misdeeds as truthfully and accurately as our ability will allow.

HE contended a newspaperman isn't capable of taking an active part in shaping events. Once in awhile, he said, a newspaper man "breaks loose, wangles a political job and really accomplishes something." Or he writes a book.

"Failing in escape," the writer summed up, "he gets his compensation and soothes his libido by standing at speak-easy bars telling the bartender or whoever else will listen how pally he is with Tom Lamont, what he said to Peggy Joyce or what Frank Roosevelt said to him."

I smiled when I read "Cub's" observations. I suspect the chap isn't a "Cub" at all but a newspaperman temporarily soured on things in general. Maybe they've got him on the desk when he wants to be on the street. Or maybe he's getting old and is asking himself: "Where am I going? Will I end up clipping the files?"

I guess I've chronicled the doings of the heroes and the scoundrels as often as the next. I've been doing it for 20 years. I liked it as a "cub." I like it now. I've enjoyed

meeting the Page One personalities—among them President Roosevelt, Al Smith, Jimmy Walker, Calvin Coolidge, Anton Cermak, Huey Long, Col. Lindbergh, Byrd, Acosta, Eckener, Balchen, Grover Whalen, Mulrooney, John D. Rockefeller, Henry Ford, Thomas A. Edison, Cox, Davis, Lamont, Dempsey, Sharkey, Tunney, Schmeling, Pancho Villa, Bobby Jones, Von Elm, Hagen, Rockne, Babe Ruth, Nick Altrock, Al Capone, "Legs" Diamond, "Big Tim" Murphy, Harry K. Thaw, Evelyn Nesbit, Ruth Snyder, Judd Gray, Velma West, Dr. Snook, Daddy Browning, Peaches Browning, Arnold Rothstein and "Texas" Guinan.

IF I were 18 again I'd do it all over again—be a newspaperman. What if I haven't, as "Cub" indicates of newspapermen in general, taken an active part in shaping events? At least I've seen some of the things happen.

The throb, the pulse-beat, is always there for the real newspaperman. I have found the lure of the business a material compensation in itself. It

keeps you happy. Isn't that what we're all seeking—happiness? I've never even considered a political job nor a press agent's job. They're too dead. And I haven't got around to writing a book yet.

Newspaper work has been my all. It's a live, pulsating business. It pays well, too. It provides an ever-recurring "kick" because no two days are the same. At times it calls for all the mental and physical energy you have.

If you are exceptionally talented you are "made" and you are up "in the money." If you are just "good" you will always eat well and have as much as the next. If you are the ordinary run-of-mine newspaperman you'll at least have fun.

I'VE had my fun and I'm still having it. I've been a reporter-writer-editor for over two decades and I get up in the morning now with the same "What's doing?" attitude of mind that first gripped me in my cub days.

That's the way we newspaper fellows are. Maybe we do, as "Cub" says, give the speak-easy bartender an earful about the interesting people we have met. But what of it? Maybe we are "all wet" but we secretly pity those who have to toil in the more prosaic professions and businesses.

I picked up the New York *Evening Journal* as I was pounding this out on my ouija board. A name over an article on the front page gave me a tinge of pleasure. It was signed:

"By Dorothy Kilgallen."

She is my 19-year-old daughter. So you see I haven't been "kidding" in this article. If I were I would have prevented her from going into the newspaper business.

Yes I would!



Mr. Kilgallen

STORIES written "By James L. Kilgallen" are familiar to newspaper editors and readers all over the country. He is International News Service's star reporter, working out of the New York office, with the Western hemisphere as his beat.

In a recent interview with the American Press, Kilgallen was quoted as placing "tact" and "versatility" first and second respectively in the repertoire of a successful modern newspaper reporter. Kilgallen's news "beats," which have brought him to the top

ranks of America's all-time great reporters, are based upon his ability to practice what he preaches.

From boxing matches in a smoke-dimmed stadium where the top and subsoil of society meet on common ground, to the swanky polo green where only the higher strata congregate; from the sordid atmosphere of criminal trials to the flood-ravaged Southland; from one extreme to the other, this reporter swings throughout the nation.

He has covered more big American murder trials than perhaps any other newspaperman. He wrote the dramatic stories of the electrocution of Ruth Snyder and Judd Gray at Sing Sing, the hanging of Gerald Chapman at Hartford, and others to the extent of more than two million words. He has entree with the high and the lowly, has interviewed Rockefeller and Capone on successive days and generally is found where the big news is breaking.

Some Sports Writing History

By FRED WITTNER

Sports Desk, the New York Herald Tribune

SOME people are born too early; some too late.

Back in the forenoon of the nineteenth century, a man whose name was anathema in many circles ran a newspaper which generally was not to be found in silk-and-satin settings. His ideas of what a daily paper should contain were so sharply divergent from the editorial theories of that early time that his colleagues in the trade frequently felt the necessity to vent their fury on his frail frame.

It is a matter of common record that he "took the rap," yet revelled in it. Martyrs generally do.

James Gordon Bennett, the elder, gets my vote for the privilege to dispossess the myriad figures of history who are eulogized as "Men Who Lived Before Their Times."

THERE probably have been greater editors and newspapermen on the American scene intellectually and ethically, but few could surpass Bennett in foresight. He was the first editor in this country to feel the pulse of the multitude, to discover what news interested the greatest number and to feed that interest with the least possible delay.

In order to avoid penetrating too far into a subject that others are more qualified to discuss, I should make clear that my chief interest in Bennett has been in his discovery of the intense appeal carried by sports news. As a personal journalist, Bennett was the target of criticism. As Greeley's New York Tribune, always an opponent of Bennett's Herald, said at his death: "He developed the capacities of journalism in a most wonderful manner, but he did it by degrading its character."

Whether he degraded the character of journalism I am not prepared to say. That he did play an important role in the development of many

phenomena of modern journalism, considered indispensable to newspaper publishing today, is the dominant concern here.

PERHAPS you are saying, "Well, who cares about sports and sports writing?"

Anyone connected in any way with the production of a newspaper cannot afford to ignore the sports section. Whether you want to or not, it's impossible to overlook. In volume it surpasses every other classification of news; in content and style there is nothing in the modern newspaper quite approximating it. And, like a growing child who no sooner gets a new suit than he needs a new size, the sports section is constantly increasing in size and scope.

All newspapers have witnessed this gradual growth in the sports section since the end of the War, sometimes attempting to stem its advance but always being forced to yield. It has been a gradual phenomenon. During the last decade the space devoted to sports has doubled and trebled; the Sunday sections in New York are as large as 12 pages!

BILL MCGEEHAN, veteran sports columnist of the New York Herald Tribune, likes to tell of his experiences as a sports editor during the period

when the sports page was changing in size and scope.

"Up to about ten years ago, the New York dailies were standing on a limit of two pages for sports. At that time I was sports editor of the New York Herald. One summer evening I made some estimates as to space requirements and went with them to the managing editor. There were two crucial baseball series, a championship prize fight, some important golf and tennis, a big day at the race track and some other events.

"I do not see how all this can be kept in two pages," I said.

"Well, then, let us have three sports pages," said the managing editor. "It will come eventually, so why not now?"

THE modern sports department handles accounts of every known form of athletics, some 45 in all, ranging from archery to yachting. When Bennett was injecting virility in the newspaper methods of 1840, horse-racing and boxing were the only popular competitive sports. News of sports was considered the province of the weeklies devoted to them, and daily newspapers, until the penny papers and Bennett's Herald, practically ignored them.

Before Bennett, the New York Transcript had attempted to take advantage of the mass interest in sports, devoting almost two columns to an account of a 46-round fight. However, it remained for Bennett to bring personality and the element of time to bear on such news. "In every species of news," he wrote, "the Herald will be one of the earliest of the early." He described his paper as lively, saucy and spicy, and these characteristics can be singled out in his sports writings.

Bennett prided himself on the rapidity with which the Herald carried the

FRED WITTNER, author of the accompanying article on sports writing history, did his first newspaper work as a high school sports reporter for the Brooklyn Eagle. Later he covered yachting, worked on the sports desk and handled racing charts.

He entered the University of Wisconsin in 1927 and received a B.A. in Journalism in 1931. While in the university he made his expenses free-lancing, averaging \$800 for nine-month periods. During summer vacations he returned East to cover yachting and other sports for the Eagle.

He joined the New York Herald Tribune's sports copy desk immediately after graduation and has been employed there since. He is the author of "The Evolution of the American Newspaper Sports Section" and has contributed to a number of magazines and newspapers.

— and Hysteria

« « «

news of an important sports event. On May 14, 1842, he wrote:

"The long talked of contest between the Southern horse Boston and northern mare Fashion, came off on Tuesday at one o'clock, and by fleet express horses, engaged for the purpose, we were able to give the public the full result in an extra in the short space of 30 minutes after the race had terminated."

WHEN Georges Carpentier of France fought Jack Dempsey of the United States for the heavy-weight championship of the world in 1921 at Boyle's Thirty Acres in New Jersey, the newspapers of the country performed journalistic somersaults in covering the event. The glamour surrounding international contests in all sports from chess to yachting during modern times has aroused the American public to keen excitement. It probably springs from the traditional American awe for all things royal plus a sort of filial reverence for the customs of the Old World. Even 70 years ago international sporting events took place, and the manner in which the press treated them provides an interesting basis for arriving at some definite conclusions with regards to the sports section as we know it.

When the Benecia Boy, an American blacksmith's helper, fought Tom Sayers, an English bricklayer's laborer, an important event in ring history, in April, 1860, the presses of the New York Herald ran day and night for four days to satisfy the desire of the public for complete accounts of the "great international match" held in London. Column after column of material was carried before the match, and as soon as the "intelligence" arrived from abroad, the pages of the Herald were filled with the most complete reports of the fight obtainable.

When Fashion and Peytona met in 1845 to settle their intersectional claims to equine supremacy, Bennett realized that his public was greatly aroused over the match. On the day preceding the contest he carried two-column woodcuts of the horses with the following story lead underneath:

SPORTING INTELLIGENCE

The Great Race between Fashion and Peytona, tomorrow over the Union Course, Long Island

By way of assisting fair and legitimate sport, we have compiled

such information from various sources, among which is the *Spirit of the Times*, as may be found useful on the occasion. Having no desire or interest to bias the judgment of parties, either one way or the other, we have confined ourselves to mere facts, leaving our readers to form their own opinion of the two noble animals, etc. As respects the betting, we from time to time give, it is such as has taken place immediately within our notice.

THEN followed minute details and descriptions of the pedigree, characteristics and performances of the two horses, the arrangements made for the race and other so-called "dope" which to a lesser extent form the composition of the modern advance story of the turf.

The following day, on which the race took place, Bennett announced on page 2, below the mast, that the Herald would operate an "extraordinary express" from the Union Course to the Herald office and that four extra editions would be issued during the day. The fourth extra, he explained, would not be issued if the same horse won the first and second heats.

Eight "competent reporters and writers," his announcement continued, would cover the race and "no other newspaper will have such a graphic account."

IT must be remembered that newspapers of the time had to depend on means other than the telegraph and telephone to transfer news. They used carrier pigeons and horses, and Bennett never passed up an opportunity to compliment himself on the manner by which he outwitted his rivals in obtaining the news first. When the Herald was "scooped," Bennett never mentioned the fact, but on other occasions he always called attention to the alacrity of his news-gathering forces. For example:

INCIDENTS OF THE GREAT RACE ON TUESDAY.—Immediately after the first heat, the next thing in importance to the race itself, was the speedy transmission of the news to different quarters, and sundry persons connected with the newspaper press were on the *qui vive* for that purpose. About ten or twelve pigeons were sent off with the tidings, some to Philadelphia, others to this city. At first they kept hovering about the course fully a quarter of an hour—now in one di-

rection, now in another—at one time disappearing, and again returning to repeat their flight. What became of the Philadelphia birds, we have not yet learned, but it appears that of those which started for this city, those freighted with the intelligence for this office performed their task—in other cases it was a complete failure, but in ours the winged messengers flew with amazing celerity and promptitude to their habitations, enabling us to announce the intelligence long before all others.

WHEN Peytona and Fashion met for the second time in Camden, N. J., Bennett informed his readers, "The second great trial of speed . . . which takes place today over the Camden course, will be reported at length in tomorrow's paper. A special reporter and carrier pigeons, are sent there for the purpose. We wanted to engage a fallen angel, who could go over the earth at the speed of 349 miles an hour, but his rates were too high for this century. We, and our readers must be content, therefore, with steam, or electricity, or carrier pigeons for the present."

Little did Bennett realize as he wrote that less than a century later speeding airplanes would carry news stories and photographs from one section of the country to another.

When Bennett was unable to attend important sporting events himself, he sent "Uncle Joe" Elliott, superintendent of the Herald's delivery room, to double for him. In May, 1847, when Yankee Sullivan defeated Caunt, the Englishman, in a prize fight held early in the morning at Harper's Ferry, Elliott sat at the ringside dictating a story to a stenographer. Pony express riders carried the story to New York in time to print it two days after the fight took place, regarded as much of a journalistic feat then as the transmission of photographs by telegraph across continents is today.

Sports reporting has come a long way since the delivery room superintendent sat in at the dew-covered prize fight ground near Harper's Ferry.

EDITORIALLY, Bennett went to even greater extremes. He connected the international prize fight with politics, venturing with the utmost sincerity the fantastic opinion that the government at Washington and the British cabinet might have

been responsible for the affair. Said the *Herald*:

"People who walk about the world with their eyes shut see nothing in this contest but a vulgar and brutal encounter between two bruisers; but we believe it has a very great bearing upon our foreign relations generally, and our British cousins particularly. Is it not highly probable that some very exalted personages at Washington and in Downing Street are

at the bottom of all this disturbance? Is it at all likely that a mere prize fight, the chosen amusement of the scum of the community, would attract so much attention as this affair unless there was something important behind it? . . . And who can say that the whole affair has not been gotten up with the knowledge and assistance of our government at Washington and the British Cabinet? Who knows that the Prime Minister of England and the Sec-

retary of State of the United States have not, by their emissaries, secretly encouraged this affair as the cheapest and best way of settling up old scores between the two countries—getting rid of all the bad feeling, and taking a fresh start, with nothing but amicable relations?"

All this is exceedingly interesting as some proof that sporting hysteria is not a state of mind peculiar to the Twentieth Century.

AND THIS IS 1933!

By EDITOR X

MY two predecessors, former editors and publishers of the paper which I now publish, were shot down while in service. Now the "boss" of the underworld has warned me to "watch out!"

Editor No. 1 was shot through the heart while walking down a street. He never had a chance to defend himself. His assailant fled in the darkness.

Editor No. 2 was shot down in the post office while getting his morning mail. He died shortly afterward.

No one was punished for either crime.

Why?

Easy enough!

THIS town is located in the mountains on the Pacific Coast. For years it has been called the "Hell Hole of the Pacific." A place where gambling, saloons and a row of sporting houses have flourished. A town where, but a few short years ago, a piece of red flannel hung on the posts along the main street brought terror to the hearts of peace-loving men and women, the bit of flannel being an official warning to keep off the streets, a gun fight was liable to occur at any moment. A town where cattlemen, sheepmen, miners and lumberjacks drifted in to find diversion.

A town where graves often were dug hastily in the night when a stranger got a little too fresh with one of the girls or won a bit too much at the card table. A town where it was considered good form to have eyes that saw not and ears that heard not, unless you were handy with a gun. A town where men locked themselves in a room and played cards day and night until one or the other went broke. A town where a fortune often

was made on the throw of the dice, then lost next day in a card game.

EDITOR No. 1 was shot in the dark. No one, of course, knew who did the killing. Why should a deputy sheriff worry over the fate of an editor so indiscreet as to publish the activities of some of the boss gamblers?

The case of Editor No. 2 was slightly different. Some pretense of enforcing the law was necessary. So the boss gambler, who also was the "underworld king" and the man who fired the shot, was arrested. At his trial, half a dozen gamblers testified that it was a case of self-defense. The judge quickly dismissed the case.

The boss gambler refused to permit the town to have a bank. He operated a racket whereby all cattlemen, sheepmen, miners and lumberjacks were obliged to cash their pay checks in his gambling joints and saloons. His bartenders and gaming-table boosters picked the victims, after they had cashed their checks, of every dollar they had. In many instances, victims were found unconscious in the back alley with a blackjack wound on the head.

EDITORS No. 1 and No. 2 wanted a clean town. A town worth living in. A town that could prosper and grow under legitimate conditions. They wrote strong editorials and emphasized that the way of the transgressor was hard. They pleaded for cooperation. They urged a clean-up. Today they rest in a little hillside cemetery on the outskirts of the town. They fought the good fight. They kept the faith. They exercised leadership and it cost them their lives.

Out in the world these two editors are unknown. No monuments have been erected to commemorate their

courage; their idealism, or their high sense of duty. Today, the widow of No. 2 passes up and down the main street of the town, with deep lines of sorrow written on her face. When her husband's name is mentioned, a strange light comes into her eyes as she replies:

"He was a good man. Why did they kill him?"

An underworld boss has warned me to never leave my home at night. To ignore all night telephone calls. And—to watch out!

YET, if an editor has not sufficient courage to fight for the protection of the people at large; to expose crooks, rascals and grafters, pray who is there to carry the torch of idealism and encourage justice?

And yet, in my own case, what a hopeless fight!

The sheriff depends on the political bosses to get the required number of votes to elect him. And the political bosses operate the saloons, gambling joints and sporting houses. The deputy sheriffs' jobs are "plums" handed out to political workers. The judge is likewise elected and put into office by the political bosses. Just one grand merry-go-round, and what are you going to do about it?

In my own case, I keep bitterness and antagonism out of my paper, my writing and my heart. But I strive continually through my editorials to sow the seeds of desire for better things. I advocate justice; fair play; good-will to all; malice towards none; but—will I attain results? I dare not say.

Shall I join my predecessors in the little hillside cemetery? Hard to tell. At any rate, I'm at least trying to leave a memory of living up to what I preach.

Steady Markets for Short Items

By DOUGLAS LURTON

Assistant Managing Editor, the Fawcett Publications

SCIENTIFIC and mechanical magazines offer steady markets for short items that bring in small checks and encouragement that whet the writer's appetite for bigger and better returns. Every resourceful reporter has scores of features for these magazines within easy reach.

Publications in this classification are seldom overstocked. The features they require *must* be timely; surplus stocks being destroyed as outdated and useless. Consequently there is always a ready market with the leaders in this field. Remuneration is liberal and prompt and big names mean little for the reason that the magazine and not the writer has the "fan" following. The idea means much more than the writer's name.

The observant reporter can find material everywhere—in the newspapers, manufacturing plants, patent attorneys' offices, machine shops, stores where newly issued novelties are displayed, government reports, meetings of scientific organizations, technical departments of colleges and universities, in their homes and their friends' homes and offices—everywhere.

TWO things over all others must be observed by a writer for these magazines. His idea or material must be fresh, in its slanting at least. He must provide photographs or rough sketches or both. Invariably the editors of mechanics' magazines look for photographs with which to illustrate the articles. The better the pictures, the more certain the sale. In fact, good photographs will often "sell" a poorly prepared article, but poor pictures are a handicap which a finely written article can not overcome.

Articles for these publications range from items of not more than 100 words, illustrated by a single photograph or sketch, to articles some 2,500 words in length, profusely illustrated. Payment is varied accordingly from three dollars to three hundred, and sometimes more for a subject suitable for illus-

TIPS on the types of material used in scientific and mechanical magazines and pointers on preparing copy for such periodicals are continued in this article by Douglas Lurton, assistant managing editor of the Fawcett Publications, of Minneapolis.

The article is the second in a series Mr. Lurton, a former newspaperman and the author of numerous articles and stories, has prepared for *The Quill*, slanting them particularly for newspapermen who may desire to add to their present incomes.

tration on the cover. Generally these magazines do not make payment on a close wordage basis. The payment is primarily for the idea.

Examination of an issue or two of any of these magazines will reveal the broad range of subjects utilized and open to the skillful reporter—an avenue down which he may stroll, plucking checks from bushes that he never realized were bearing cash fruit. In a general way, these magazines classify their material as features, photo shorts, "handikinks," and "how-to-build" articles.

THE feature articles must have general interest and treat of scientific or mechanical subjects, such as new inventions and their application, in lengths ranging from 1,000 to 2,500 words. The subjects are innumerable; anything dealing with attention-arresting new inventions, treasure salvaging, methods of mining gold, and almost anything mechanical bearing on money-winning projects. They may range from the latest miracles of the X-ray to the thrills and mechanics

of motorcycling or trick home photography.

Futuristic articles on rocket transportation, cities of the future, mechanical warfare of the future, and the like, are standard; and the reporter must present something decidedly different to sell in this oft-trampled field.

The photo shorts division includes photographs of mechanical novelties that are attention arresting, rich in human as well as scientific interest. This type of material is purchased steadily by practically all of the popular scientific magazines at rates of three to five dollars and more. The photographs should be accompanied by brief explanatory text which includes the names and addresses of the persons involved. Photographs of household utensils, newly developed novelties, are readily saleable. And whenever the photograph and text deals with a manufactured article the name and address of the manufacturer should be supplied so the editors can refer interested readers to the manufacturer.

IN the "handikinks" classification come ideas such as new uses for automobile inner tubes, new ways to accomplish easy tasks, "gadgets" for the home, office, garage or shop. These short items, illustrated by photographs or rough sketches giving magazine staff artists necessary information for finished work, are usually purchased on the idea basis at from three to five dollars and more. These items rarely run more than two hundred words in length.

The "how-to-build" articles explain simply and clearly the construction plans for almost "everything under the sun" that can be constructed by a home craftsman in his own shop. These articles may present plans for making light airplanes, gliders, boats, midget automobiles, trailers, summer camps, radio sets, an aquarium for toy fish, electric novelties, home or shop

(Continued on page 13)

The Second of a Series of Articles That May Enable You To Enter the Magazine Writing Field in Your Spare Time

Plain Talk to Undergraduate Editors

By CURTIS D. MAC DOUGALL

Department of Journalism, University of Wisconsin

COLLEGIATE newspapers, literary, humorous and other publications are no better than they are largely because undergraduate editors fail to discriminate between professional journalistic practices which they can and cannot imitate to their advantage.

Not all methods which make for success in commercial journalism are adaptable to student publications; others which could, perhaps, be imitated ought not to be because they are unworthy of any journalism, amateur or professional.

An historical survey of undergraduate periodicals reveals that since their inception they have used commercial newspapers and other publications as their models. Innovations in them have followed similar ones in publications admired by college boys and girls. There has been much poor judgment and little discrimination in getting "on the bandwagon" whenever a new circulation-getter was concocted by some successful practicing alumnus.

The most obvious case in point, perhaps, is the extent to which undergraduate comic publications have prostrated themselves before *College Humor* magazine. The main purpose of many student editors of allegedly funny publications is to "make" *College Humor*; serving the interests of the campus subscribers may become entirely secondary.

COLLEGE literary and news publications do not have the financial incentive to imitate any particular standard magazine or newspaper, but the urge to emulate the latest fad or fancy is strong. Five years ago there was scarcely a college literary publication which considered itself "chic" that was not as much a replica of Henry L. Mencken's *American Mercury* as conditions and faculty censors permitted. As the influence of Mr. Mencken's contribu-

tion to Americana waned, sycophants of the *Mercury* have decreased in number. At present there are several popular models including *The New Yorker*, *Harpers*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Time*, awaiting the appearance of a new idea which all will want to copy.

In imitation of current professional newspaper practice the "colyum" is the contemporary rage. Heywood Broun, Walter Lippmann, and Walter Winchell serve as models for more aspiring journalists than all the good examples in all the good textbooks on journalism.

Reasons for this situation are not difficult to find. First, the professional model is the easiest to obtain and the most obvious. Undergraduate readers are accustomed to reading regular newspapers, and it is therefore supposed that they desire their campus publications to be of the same kind. Second, most undergraduate editors consider somewhat seriously a professional journalistic career and regard the practical experience gained by working for a student periodical as of more value than theoretical courses taught by elderly professors who may or may not have had actual newspaper experience. Words of advice and caution from these professors, and from parents and alumni, cause sympathetic smiles for the old fogeys.

I do not wish to be interpreted as be-

ing opposed to the use of the undergraduate newspaper as a laboratory for reporting and editing students. On the contrary I believe that every extracurricular activity should have an educational or vocational purpose. Members of a college glee club are not taught to sing through their noses and thus compelled later to unlearn a great deal of their instruction after commencement. Neither are the rules and principles adhered to in collegiate athletics, dramatics, or oratory different from those in vogue in the analogous professional fields. Fallacious, therefore, would be the argument that college journalism should be considered in a different light.

It must be realized, however, that the essential problem of any editor, amateur or professional, is to diagnose the needs of the public he is attempting to reach and to decide his editorial policy accordingly. No two publications appeal to exactly the same group or groups. The *New York Times* is different from its neighbor, the *Herald Tribune*; the *Christian Science Monitor* is nothing like the *Chicago Herald and Examiner*. The problem of the student editor would seem easy, for he is not faced with the necessity of creating his public; it is created for him at registration. A student himself, he is, or should be, familiar with the undergraduate (his public's) point of view.

The undergraduate editor is not serving the best interests of his readers when he clutters up his pages with columns, more columns, features, side features, reviews, amateurish interpretations of national and international politics, etc., at the expense of legitimate news and intelligent comment thereon. Nevertheless, a week's statistical study of a student newspaper at a university proud of having one of the oldest and best schools of journalism in the

HERE are two articles on a subject to which *The Quill* has not devoted a great amount of attention—campus journalism.

One of the articles, written by Bruce C. Yates, assistant editor of the *Daily Californian*, published by the students of the University of California, relates the difficulties faced by college dailies under present conditions. The other, written by Curtis D. MacDougall, a lecturer in journalism at the University of Wisconsin, treats outspokenly of the faults and failings of campus editors and their publications.

Perhaps some of the difficulties cited by Mr. Yates may be traced to deficiencies discussed by Mr. MacDougall.

Mr. MacDougall formerly was with the United Press in Chicago. Later he taught in the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University and then was head of the journalism courses at Lehigh University before assuming his present connection. He is the author of "Reporting for Beginners," published by Macmillan last spring and now used widely as a text.

country, reveals that it devotes 21 per cent of its reading space regularly to such material. The special columns number 10 so that virtually every executive aspiring to write one has an opportunity to do so. In another leading college newspaper, a four-pager, these columns number five; they take up on the average 50 inches of space or about 20 per cent of the total reading matter.

As I am intimately acquainted with both of these schools, I know that the general news coverage is lamentably inadequate and that readers, student and faculty alike, constantly complain of this shortcoming. Skeletonizing or omission of important stories is explained as due to "lack of space," but no editor ever would consider cutting down or leaving out the issue's juvenile philosophy. Reporters on papers which value columns above news naturally become slovenly, and often when there is space it must be filled with exchange copy or other filler; the staff, accustomed to writing for the wastebasket, has not come through.

OF the columns, the Walter Winchell type is at present the vogue. Arthur Brisbane columns of comment

on world affairs are on the wane. Let me quote a few paragraphs from a recent issue of a well-known undergraduate newspaper to illustrate the stupidity of campus columns.

Jane Cunningham, '33, drags down the knitted ball-bat for not calling up her one and only when she was in Chicago. Shame, Janie, shame.

Delta Gamma! Six of your sisters were observed—headed by Vera Simonson, '34—to be walking down Larson Avenue chain-gang fashion last Wednesday. Are they fugitives?

We wonder who Elsie Thomsen was waiting for last Friday night at the entrance to Science Hall. Was it B. L. or A. G., Elsie?

Could anything be more reminiscent of the most puerile kind of backwoods journalism? To how many readers of the average-sized college newspaper are such "witticisms" interesting or meaningful? Beginning with enough material for a week or two, the columnist sooner or later (usually sooner) runs dry. There just isn't enough real "dirt" on the campus of even the largest university to keep him going. So he begins to verge on the obscene

or else, as is more likely, he writes about a small clique of his acquaintances. Fully half of the names appearing in the "Winchell column" of a certain leading university newspaper are those of students of journalism, members of the fraternity to which the columnist belongs, or of the sorority with which his girl friend is affiliated. The faculty of the school of journalism, of course, comes in for a triple dose of panning.

FROM the standpoint of the potential professional journalist, practice in imitating Walter Winchell or any other successful columnist is so much time wasted. The college columnist who believes that he is training himself to become the successor of an illustrious journalist by becoming proficient in his style, is worse than foolish. Likewise, it is a vain hope that one ever will conduct a similar column. A new idea is necessary before a new feature can be widely successful.

Originality and a fresh point of view should be what the undergraduate journalist strives to acquire as assets in his attempt to set the journalistic world on fire. No matter how well he

(Continued on page 10)

College Dailies Take the Count

By BRUCE C. YATES

Assistant Editor, The Daily Californian

AS Old Man Depression cuts deeper and deeper with his scythe of Despair and widens his swath to include those who never thought they would be affected, the situation grows black for college dailies.

The *Daily Californian*, student newspaper of the University of California, has grown from a tiny sheet called the *College Echo*, housed in a musty attic room in an historic building on the campus, into a modern efficient daily with a leased wire system, a large staff of reporters, and an apprentice system for reporters the equivalent of a trade school.

Up to 1931, the *Californian*, which represents the average condition of most college dailies, was going strong. Merchants gave advertising freely and eight-page papers (which is a good size for a college sheet) were common occurrences. Encouraged by the large editions and the consequent opportunities of having more stories printed,

aspiring underclassmen flocked to this extracurricular activity.

The beginning of a period of uncertainty came in 1931, a period when ads stopped coming in as usual. Managers slaved until all hours of the night to get a few inches from some tradesman who felt that he must "draw in my horns until I know how all this is going to turn out." The paper suffered. No advertising, no large papers. No large papers, no enthusiasm. No enthusiasm, no freshmen. And no freshmen, no paper.

THIS has not been a unique case. The *Oregon Daily Emerald*, an unusually fine paper under ordinary conditions, appeared several months ago in considerably reduced size, analogous, we suppose, to a cut in the budget. An issue of the *Daily Trojan*, news organ of the University of Southern California, came out with not one paid inch of advertising!

The *Californian* has maintained

itself fairly well. The mimeograph has not yet been taken out of the closet and a steady diet of four-page papers gives the semblance of "business as usual." But these are not paying papers. Hence, a constant skimping in expenditures, a reduction of art space, and a decrease in coverage.

That last point illustrates the more pernicious effect the depression has had upon us. I refer to the undermining of morale. In an institution where the majority of workers are unpaid, enthusiasm is the most important part of the work. Students working for the "fun of it" must have a goal for which to strive, a "something" to work for. In former days they had just that. Writing for a 12- or 16-page paper, with an almost certain chance of having a story printed, was a spur to further effort. Features rolled into the office of the editor as often as did his fair-weather friends. New ideas, the élan vital of the college newspaper game,

seemed to spring from an eternal source. Beat coverage was excellent.

NOTHING is so sad as those past tenses. Nothing was ever more truly stated, or more accurately applies to these times than the old bromide, "The old order changeth." The budget has been cut? We answer that we are prepared for it. We will be allowed fewer cartoons this year? Fill the space with good features and interviews. We cannot have monogrammed stationery? Pooh! But wait, there is another stipulation, inexorably bound to the depression in the college daily. We will have less enthusiasm, stories will begin to be poorly written, the faculty and administration will gradually lose faith in us. There's the rub.

Men who were star reporters have lost interest, and show up only a few times a week, with beats inadequately covered, their spontaneity gone. Freshmen who used to run errands eagerly, now, as sophomores, are lax

in their more interesting duties. The women's staff, always a difficult problem for the managing editor to handle, has turned to rivalry and petty quarrels.

With the lack of interest on the part of the student reporter, errors creep into stories. Professors and visiting celebrities are misquoted. Meeting notices contain wrong information. Trouble ensues and the administration's confidence is weakened.

Other college papers throughout the United States are suffering similar difficulties. Editor after editor has written, telling of his troubles and asking for a sort of cooperative advice on ways to meet the situation.

What is the solution? I cannot say, but if there is not an immediate upward trend in financial support for the college daily, many will disappear completely. The college paper frequently is the only activity, save football, which pays for itself. Its decline to a "supported" status would be unbearable to staff and readers alike.

Plain Talk to Undergraduate Editors

(Continued from page 9)

is able to draw the physiognomy of Andy Gump, his chance of playing Elisha to Sidney Smith is negligible. And the same is true of all imitations of present "greats" in the professional writing field.

Emulation of successful professional writers, furthermore, is regrettable: first, because it is not sufficiently discriminatory. Some of the trash that provides a quick rise to doubtful fame for a noted columnist is not worth imitating; second, even if the model is a good one, too slavish copying of it stultifies initiative and originality; third, the imitation usually is too obvious; fourth, if readers realize what the writer is doing, they judge him by the model. Thus, by his inviting this comparison he insures his own failure.

PROFESSIONAL practices worth while for undergraduate editors to emulate are those of news writing, headlining, and makeup. These have been evolved during more than a century of experimentation. Following the lead of the press associations which began "boiling down" as a matter of economy, American newspapers have adopted a terse, vigorous style which is fairly uniform from coast to coast. A young school of journalism graduate who has spent four years learning how to pick and write a good lead, arrange

the paragraphs of his story correctly, and prepare a suitable headline in a short space of time has a much better chance of a job than a would-be columnist.

Before undergraduate editors can be expected to adopt the point of view which I advocate, they must learn to respect their elders. By elders in this case I mean their professors. There may be some poor men teaching journalism just as there are incapable instructors of all other subjects; but there are few professors of journalism whose experience and mature judgment could not be consulted to advantage by the average collegiate editor.

Much of the reluctance on the part of undergraduates to solicit faculty advice, of course, is due to fear of submitting themselves to censorship. They think they are practicing what they have been taught—to maintain the sacred principle of freedom of the press inviolate. I never have known a former newspaper man now teaching journalism who would undertake the task of censoring undergraduate publications unless forced to it by his superiors. On the other hand, I have had experience as both student and teacher with the faculty coaching plan and know it to be workable in journalism as in athletics, dramatics, forensics, and music.

LET me repeat a statement made earlier in this article: extracurricular activities which do not serve an educational or vocational purpose are wasteful during the precious four years the young man or woman spends in college to prepare himself or herself for life. As ridiculous as an uncoached football team, debate trio, play cast, or glee club is the undergraduate journalistic enterprise which refuses to accept, much less ask for, the advice or opinion of men capable of speaking from experience.

To sum the points of view of this article—imitation of the standard news writing form is profitable, as newspapers favor cubs who have mastered the terse, economical style made popular by the press associations. On the other hand, emulation of the styles of particular writers, especially columnists, or of particular newspapers or magazines, is a waste of time and energy. The undergraduates of today who will be the Will Rogers', Robert Ripleys, and Ring Lardners of the future are those who are devoting themselves to the development of original styles and to the discovery of new ideas to be "sold" first to skeptical editors and later to a critical though gullible public.

It is an asset to be able to write news stories which conform to the standard practices. It is not an asset to acquire proficiency in imitating the style of a prominent columnist or well-known feature writer. Undergraduate newspapers that open their columns to staff members for "practice" of this kind are not serving the best interests of either their readers or themselves.

AT DEADLINE

By R. L. P.

(Continued from page 2)

Mapel observes, "it has no business in the curriculum of a college or a university. If it is something more than that: a profession or an art, it must comprise more than the relatively easy task of non-interpretive transcription of the minutiae of run-of-the-mine news."

ANOTHER was the announcement that a collection of "The Best News Stories of 1933" would be made under the general editorship of Frank Luther Mott, of the University of Iowa's school of journalism. It is planned to include 75 "best" news stories in the anthology.

THE BOOK BEAT

Conducted by MITCHELL V. CHARNLEY

Max Miller, Continued

HE WENT AWAY FOR A WHILE, by Max Miller. E. P. Dutton & Company, New York. 1933. \$2.00.

"He did not want to leave the office, and for this reason he felt more positive than ever that he should go. The security of his job was getting him."

"Young reporters were the ones who still believed that all news is new news."

"He wanted for once, just for once, a chance to permit his mind to take its time over digesting a meal."

"He was convinced that every man alive, even every reporter, was entitled to one flash of independence before he died."

"No prison could be more imprisoning than to be confined within the bars of somebody else's thinking."

Excerpts, these, from Max Miller's tale of his effort to "get away for a while" and give himself a chance to see the world his own way. The book is, I suppose, the abstraction of the mood

that was at once more concrete and less visible in "I Cover the Waterfront." Max Miller, reporter, cannot be pinned to a formula. He cannot even find a formula. In the end, he has to look forward to a quite undistinguished return to the news room. "Returns were one item around the office which never changed."

"He Went Away for a While" is, to my mind, a fine book. Its style is Doric simplicity. Its philosophy, if rebellious and not yet mature, is tempered by good nature, keen curiosity and ready acknowledgment of its shortcomings. There is not, in it, the wealth of entertaining incident that marked "I Cover the Waterfront," though it is not without incident; more significantly, there is not the unconvincing self-apology. Probably it won't be as good a best-seller as Mr. Miller's first book. Probably it deserves to be much better.—M. V. C.

What? A Miracle?

NEWSPAPER DESK WORK, by Robert Miller Neal. D. Appleton & Company, New York. 1933. \$3.00.

It has often been difficult for me to understand why textbooks must be dull. Now I know they don't. Although the readability of "Newspaper Desk Work" is not the most important thing about the book, it is the most noticeable—there is an implied libel against writers of journalistic texts in this—and the one for which one is, at first glance at least, most grateful.

The author takes liberties with the traditional dignity—and drabness—of textbook diction. He writes with an enthusiasm and ingenuity that make copy reading seem an almost exciting phase of newspaper making.

But the more important thing is the book's thoroughness and "teachability." These qualities are largely secured through the printing of literally hundreds of examples, illustrations and exercises. The chapter headings are: The Desk Man's Duties, News Origins, The Copyreader's Symbols, Condensing Stories, Removing Bias and Opinion, Making Stories Emphatic, Headlines, The Need for Clarity, Suburban Copy, City Copy, Display Headlines, Telegraph Copy, Marking Copy, Sectional Stories, Spread Headlines, By-Lines and Color Stories, Newspaper Law, Crime and Suicide News, Propaganda, Cuts, Make-up.

NEWSMEN SHOULD READ—

CITIZENS' ORGANIZATIONS AND THE CIVIC TRAINING OF YOUTH, by Bessie L. Pierce. Scribner's, New York. 1933.

How the pressure group and propagandist agency indoctrinate school children with theories held sacred to them.

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR, by Marcus M. Wilkerson. Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge. 1932.

An inquiry into the part played by the newspapers in bringing on the Spanish-American War.

COMMUNICATION AGENCIES AND SOCIAL LIFE, by Malcolm M. Willey and Stuart A. Rice. McGraw-Hill, New York. 1933.

One of the monographs prepared under the direction of the President's Committee on Social Trends. The journalist will be particularly interested in the results of the study of "the agencies of mass impression"—newspaper, periodical, motion picture, radio.

THE ERA OF THE MUCKRAKERS, by C. C. Regier. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill. 1932.

The part taken by the popular-priced magazines in the movement will interest the student of journalism.

AN OUTLINE OF ADVERTISING, by George B. Hotchkiss. Macmillan, New York. 1933.

One of "a series of social science textbooks" edited by Professor Ely of Northwestern. And that alone makes it unique. It has a good chapter on the Partnership of Advertising With Journalism.

(Selections by Ralph D. Casey, Department of Journalism, University of Minnesota.)

The chapter on newspaper law is too brief to give more than the sketchiest idea of some of the dangers that lurk for the copyreader in the laws of libel. It serves, however, as a warning and it sends the reader to more substantial accounts for details.

An appendix contains a typical daily newspaper headline schedule.—Blair Converse, Department of Technical Journalism, Iowa State College.

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WHO «» WHAT «» WHERE

FORD C. FRICK (DePauw '15) is a "star sports broadcaster for the New York *Evening Journal*," according to the T. P. R. O. A. Quill, organ of the Theatrical Press Representatives of America.

WILFRID R. SMITH (DePauw '20), sports writer for the *Chicago Tribune*, addressed the Founders' Day dinner of Phi Delta Theta fraternity in Indianapolis.

GEORGE J. PEAVEY (Denver '24) and ELVIN A. HOY (Oregon State '25) have been on the faculty of the University of Hawaii in Honolulu, since 1930. Before going to the University of Hawaii, Hoy taught in College of the Pacific and Menlo and Palo Alto junior colleges. Peavey taught in the Territorial Normal and several public schools in the Territory. The University of Hawaii has a faculty of 200 members and an enrollment of 2,000 students.

RUSSELL H. REEVES (Ohio State '27) and Mrs. Reeves have announced the arrival of their second son, Bruce Warner Reeves. Mr. Reeves is on the rewrite desk of the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*.

FIELDING L. NORTON (Missouri '32) has been appointed city editor of the *Grundy County Missourian* and *Galt Tribune*, at Trenton, Mo. He was president of the journalism student body at the University of Missouri in his senior year.

ALFRED M. LEE (Pittsburgh '27), former secretary of the Pittsburgh traffic commission, has been awarded a Sterling Fellowship for postgraduate research at Yale University for the school year 1933-34. He is to receive his Ph.D. degree at Yale this June. His dissertation and the project he will work on next year deal with various trends of social importance in the rise of the American daily newspaper industry. He has held a Kennedy T. Friend fellowship at Yale during the last two years.

ROLAND E. WOLSELEY (Northwestern '28) is the author of "Protestantism in Peril" in the March issue of the *American Scholar*, quarterly published by Phi Beta Kappa.

WALTER R. HUMPHREY (Colorado '22) and Mrs. Humphrey are the parents of a daughter, Carole. Mr. Humphrey is editor of the *Temple (Texas) Telegram*.

Local reader interest surveys are being made for newspapers in the state of Washington by the University of Washington Chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity. The idea, said to be an adaptation of the survey plan made famous by GEORGE GALLUP (Iowa '22), nets the chapter a small sum for its services in interviewing readers. Surveys have been completed for newspapers in Edmonds and Snohomish.

EDWIN V. O'NEEL (DePauw '22) and Mrs. O'Neel have announced the birth of a daughter, Barbara Anne. Mr. O'Neel, publisher of the *Hagerstown (Ind.) Exponent*, is a past national president of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity.

Feature roles in the celebration at Columbia, Mo., May 1 to 6 of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the world's first school of journalism at the University of Missouri will be taken by DR. WALTER WILLIAMS (Missouri Associate), veteran dean of the school and now president of the University; CHARLES G. ROSS (Missouri Associate), Washington correspondent of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*; PROF. CHARLES ARNOLD (Pittsburgh Associate), of the University of Pittsburgh; and FRANK L. MARTIN (Missouri Associate), acting dean of the Missouri School of Journalism. Dean Williams, Ross and Prof. Martin will be honored as members of the original faculty of the school while Arnold has the distinction of being the school's first graduate.

HAMILTON E. GRAY (Iowa '29), a member of the editorial staff of the *Des Moines Register and Tribune* and a lecturer in journalism at Drake University, was killed March 23 when struck by an automobile in Des Moines. Following his graduation from the University of Iowa, Mr. Gray was editor of the *Northwood (Iowa) Anchor* and head of the department of journalism at Oklahoma Baptist College before taking up the posts he held at the time of his death. He was the author of an article entitled "Fair Play for Editorial Pages" which appeared in the September, 1931, issue of THE QUILL.

ARTHUR W. JOHNSON (Iowa State '32) is operating his own advertising service, the Central States Advertising Service, at Fort Dodge, Iowa.

ROBERT S. ALLEN, outspoken Washington correspondent, was awarded the traditional red derby at the annual grid-

iron dinner of the Wisconsin chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity, held April 1 in Madison.

ROBERT MONTGOMERY (Washington Associate), founder, editor and publisher of the *Puyallup Valley Tribune*, Puyallup, Wash., has been named a regent of the University of Washington by Gov. Clarence D. Martin.

WARREN DOUGLAS MENG (Missouri Associate), an active figure in Missouri journalism, both rural and metropolitan, for many years, has been made editor of the *Official Missouri Manual*, popularly known as the "Official Blue Book" of the State of Missouri.

NEW YORK TIMES WINS TYPOGRAPHICAL AWARD

The New York Times has been awarded the Francis Wayland Ayer Cup for typographical superiority in the Third Exhibition of Newspaper Typography, sponsored by N. W. Ayer & Son, Inc., in which 1,386 dailies were entered.

Nine awards in all were announced by the jury of three men:

Newspapers up to 10,000 circulation (total of 888 entries): First honorable mention, Chambersburg (Pa.) *Public Opinion*; second honorable mention, Adrian (Mich.) *Daily Telegram*; third honorable mention, Peoria (Ill.) *Transcript*.

Newspapers of 10,000 to 50,000 circulation (total of 357 entries): First honorable mention, Rockford (Ill.) *Register-Republic*; second honorable mention, St. Petersburg (Fla.) *Times*; third honorable mention, Hartford (Conn.) *Courant*.

Newspapers of 50,000 and more circulation (total of 141 entries): First honorable mention, New York (N. Y.) *Times*; second honorable mention, New York (N. Y.) *Herald Tribune*; third honorable mention, Cleveland (Ohio) *Press*.

The jury was composed of Fred W. Kennedy, director of the journalism laboratories, University of Washington, Seattle, and manager of the Washington Press Association; Marlen Pew, L.L.D., *Editor & Publisher*; and Fred Fuller Shedd, editor of the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* and past president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. All three jurors are members of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalism fraternity.

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Steady Markets for Short Items

(Continued from page 7)

or office furniture—in fact, nearly anything that the home worker can “knock together” with wood and metal, a lathe, chisel, drill press, hammer, and a dozen other tools.

Publishers of magazines printing “how-to-build” articles derive much of their revenue from tool manufacturers. Consequently they prefer plans which call for the use of a wide variety of tools.

Plans for “how-to-build” articles should always be presented with photographs, preferably snapshots showing step-by-step progress of construction. If the completed article has moving parts the pictures should show it in action; if it is, for instance, a mantel decoration, it should be pictured on the mantel. Drawings giving the necessary dimensions must be included to give the staff artists information for more finished drawings. The list of materials and cost items should also be included. Fine writing does not count particularly in these articles; *simple clarity* is very desirable.

THE writer always should keep the seasons in mind in preparing his articles for such magazines. In the

summer he should prepare his piece on how to build an ice boat. In the winter he should be preparing and offering his articles on how to build summer camps and motor boats.

Some of the “books” in this field are more scientific and technical than others. Examination of one copy of any of the following magazines will indicate clearly the type of material desired: *Progress, Practical Mechanics, Modern Mechanix and Inventions, Mechanical Package Magazine, Everyday Science and Mechanics, Popular Mechanics, Popular Science Monthly, Illustrated Mechanics, Electricity on the Farm, Inventive Age and Patent Market, Scientific American.*

Markets developed by the beginning writer in this field are valuable to hold when he has advanced into fiction writing. Many writers combine fiction work with production of features for these magazines; devoting off days, when fiction does not flow, to the search for and production of mechanical articles.

(Next month: Tips on writing true and fictional detective and mystery stories.)

Fight for All the Facts

By GEORGE B. ARMSTEAD

Managing Editor, the Hartford Courant

NEWSPAPERMEN will continue to encounter, as they always have, those who feel themselves entitled to determine how much of the public business shall be made known to the public. Such individuals, whether aldermen or presidents, always have righteous reasons, strangely lacking in detail, but usually labeled “for the good of the town,” “for the larger good,” or “for the national welfare.” Sometimes these self-appointed censors are sincere in their inability to recognize any ulterior purpose lurking behind their inspiration to delay, distort, or suppress uncomfortable news.

“Every time newspapermen, whether publishers or reporters, fail to fight for all the facts concerning the conduct of public business they are party to an evil deed which dangerously undermines democratic government. Incidentally, they give the people an-

other cause for mistrusting the integrity of the press. That integrity, by the way, is the publisher's largest asset; bigger by far than his capital investment, no matter how costly may be the physical plant where his newspaper is produced.

“The safety of democratic institutions rests upon public possession of all the facts of public business. The lows must be known as well as the highs, the failures as well as the successes; the shadows as well as the high lights must be in the picture men have of their self-government. What went on in Washington in Harding's time and in New York City government in recent years are merely notorious examples of what may be expected where public business is not openly transacted. Newspapermen, if they serve their country, their profession, and themselves well, will turn on the light with unrelenting

constancy. Occasionally the news will do some immediate harm to well-intentioned plans but that disappointment will be infinitesimal in comparison to the permanent damage to the cause of democracy if those who love darkness, and need secretiveness in conducting public affairs, have their way.”—From the *Bulletin* of the American Society of Newspaper Editors.

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“Your magazine is one of the best of its kind.”—Tom F. Smith, the *Miami Herald*.

“Each issue seems better than the last.”—John A. Babb, Toledo, O.

“I enjoy every issue and want to say you are putting out a splendid magazine. Particularly have I enjoyed the inspirational articles that have appeared in it the last few months; the controversial and personal experience articles.”—O. J. Buttedahl, Dept. of Journalism, University of North Dakota.

“I want to compliment you on *THE QUILL* and the constant improvement being made therein. I enjoy every issue.”—T. R. Johnston, director, news bureau, Purdue University.

“Congratulations on the job you people are doing on the magazine. I am quite sure I haven't missed a word in any issue in the last year.”—J. C. Patterson, of R. H. Bacon & Co., Chicago, Ill.

“I think you have had some very fine articles this year; straight stuff on adjusting one's self to the depression in the journalistic fields.”—Robert V. Breen, student, Marquette University.

“I enjoy reading *THE QUILL* and believe that it has made consistent improvement since I first read it.”—Fred W. May, St. Louis bureau, the Associated Press.

Exactly the same number of journalism alumni and former students from the University of Oklahoma have jobs in their profession at present as one year ago, in spite of decreased newspaper staffs. Questionnaires sent out by H. H. Herbert, director of the University of Oklahoma's journalism school, indicate that 215 Sooners who studied journalism are employed on newspapers or in allied occupations. The number a year ago was the same. Changes in jobs have been frequent, however.

«» AS WE VIEW IT «»

HOW responsible is a newspaper for advertising published in its columns? To what lengths should a newspaper go to determine the merits of a product before it accepts copy promoting its sale? Hasn't the reader of a newspaper the right to expect the advertising columns to be as straightforward as the news columns?

These questions are prompted by a perusal of the volume "100,000,000 Guinea Pigs," a book discussing the dangers in everyday foods, drugs and cosmetics, many of which are advertised in the country's leading newspapers and magazines.

Using trade names and widely advertised brands as examples, this *exposé* contrasts the claims advanced for certain products in the advertising columns to the lack of merit or dangers found by the American Medical Association or other organizations.

Certain newspapers have censored their advertising columns for varying periods. Their action has eliminated considerable objectionable advertising. This volume suggests there must be further restriction if newspapers and magazines are honestly to serve the best interests of their readers.

If you are associated with either the business or editorial sides of a newspaper or magazine you will find some troubling revelations in "100,000,000 Guinea Pigs."

WE'VE voiced our sentiments before in these columns regarding the advertising ballyhoo that finds its way into the news columns under the guise of news because of a "B. O. Must." Now we are going to add a few more words.

In recent weeks, more and more of this bilge has been bundled into the news columns—and all the while city editors, news editors and managing editors have been pleading, screaming and almost coming to blows over their need for more space in which to present the dramatic news events of the day.

We've noticed space devoted to National Foot Health Week, National Financial Independence Week, National

Egg Week and other weeks and days of like nature; we've seen editorial space handed over—perhaps not without a strongly voiced objection on the part of an irate M. E.—to some spasm about the opening of an amusement park or a promotional stunt of some department store.

If there is any reason for such weeks or days—and it would seem they have reached the height of absurdity—there is plenty of room in the advertising columns to extol their supposed virtues. The same is true of other promotional matter.

The freer the editorial columns are kept of such stuff—and a paper's own promotional matter—the better.

THE symposium idea, explained in THE QUILL in connection with the discussion at the University of Wisconsin by newspapermen and scientists of their difficulties in dealing with each other, is spreading to other schools.

Members of the faculty of a journalism school or department; members of their classes and of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity; active newspaper and magazine men; scientists and others gather to discuss mutual problems freely and forcefully.

Out of such meetings is coming a better understanding, a realization of the other fellow's point of view. We hope the idea spreads rapidly. And congratulations to the Wisconsin chapter of Sigma Delta Chi for starting the ball rolling.

OUR congratulations and best wishes are extended to the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri, first of its kind in the world, now celebrating its silver anniversary, and to its founder, Dr. Walter Williams, now president of the university.

The influence of the founder, his associates and the school they have directed has been far reaching. Graduates of the school may be found practically everywhere that journalism exists. Their accomplishments bear witness to their training and preparation for the field in which so many of them have distinguished themselves.

AS THEY VIEW IT

Why Not Journalist?

WHY have American newspapermen so long resisted the term 'journalist' as the equivalent of 'newspaperman'? The question is raised by Vernon McKenzie, head of the department of journalism, University of Washington. He says quite truly that the old-timer defined journalist as one who 'wears spats and carries a cane, though he does not limp.'

"There is a vast amount of nonsense in craft posing, of course, but the behavior of newspapermen is no more eccentric than that of the followers of any other profession or art which makes demands upon personality. Most American newspapermen are democratic spirits, a reaction no doubt to the pretensions of a generally hypocritical world with which they are in painfully intimate contact. Reporters come to despise false fronts and years ago turned against such innocent yet useless appendages as spats and canes, symbols of the 'journalist' of former days.

"It is, of course, utter nonsense, and indulgence of this prejudice has deprived the craft of a good, descriptive word. In recent years we have noted less antagonism to the word all along the line."—Editor and Publisher.

Editorials in a Weekly

EDITORIALS in a weekly newspaper, in my opinion, should be confined mainly to subjects with local angles, or at least to subjects of known local interest. Controversial subjects should not be avoided, but handled openly and frankly in an unbiased manner, and should reflect not so much the opinion of the editor as a majority viewpoint of the community, for after all you publish a newspaper to be read by the people of the community and not to satisfy any selfishness of your own.

"One of the essentials, of course, of an editorial writer is that he be well read, and that much time be devoted to reflection. Added to this, however, should be a background of experience and contacts with people and problems. In this day of unprecedented distress felt in every community, naturally the biggest problem needing solution is the economic one, which should be the main subject of editorial comment. There never was a period, at least during my limited lifetime, when the country publisher and editor could make himself felt so much, and be such a great asset to his community as now."—Paul G. Mohler, of the Berea (O.) News, in the Ohio Newspaper.

CULTIVATION

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